

LESSON 7: TEAM DEVELOPMENT



actions
beliefs
constructive criticism
cooperate
cultivate
dedication
followership
professionalism
self-discipline
self-reliance
staff study
teamwork

PURPOSE

This lesson covers the fundamental leadership concepts: individual responsibility to yourself and to others on a team, the benefits of **self-reliance**, the traits of good **followership**, and the importance of a team and **teamwork**. All of these concepts are part of becoming a leader and all are equally important to the successful completion of a mission.

INTRODUCTION

Do you believe you are a good follower or team member? Being a good follower is one of the first steps to becoming a good leader. To be successful at both, know your individual responsibilities, then **cultivate** your self-reliance and self-image. Know how to apply the traits of followership, and the role that you play in a team will be more rewarding and challenging. You will have many opportunities throughout JROTC to develop your leadership skills and abilities, be

a follower and a team member, and lead a team, squad, and higher.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Your individual responsibilities include respecting yourself, being honest with yourself, and developing confidence and a winning attitude. By respecting yourself, you will know how to respect others. Treating others as you wish to be treated is an important quality to good human relations.

If you always strive to do your best, you will become a better follower and a better leader.

A part of being honest with yourself and treating others as you wish to be treated is learning to accept criticism. Accepting criticism is not easy to do, but receiving **constructive criticism** can help you to improve yourself. How do you think Brian would react if you told him that he should change his leadership style? As you continue to develop your desirable personality traits and leadership skills and abilities, you will become more confident of yourself and of your ideas.

Additionally, by showing respect, honesty, fairness, and responsibility to others, you are being a good follower and a good leader. Make these qualities, and the ones discussed above, a part of your own personal leadership style. When you do, the changes you see in others will be a reflection of the changes in you.

SELF-RELIANCE

Self-reliance means being able to depend upon your own efforts and abilities; it is also having confidence in and exercising your own powers of judgment. In order to improve your self-reliance, you must be honest in acknowledging areas where you need change.

When you are a member of a team and you are self-reliant, your entire team benefits. By doing your part of a task to the best of your abilities (the leadership trait of dependability), your team members do not have to pick up the slack. Then, if every member of the team does their part, the team is more apt to finish its task on schedule and to meet or exceed the expected standards.

Self-reliance can also benefit you. When you can rely upon yourself to do something, it gives you a feeling of pride. Self-reliance demonstrates your competence and commitment to other team members. Remember Jon? His team members knew how competent and committed he was and, as a result of his actions, he instilled confidence in them to do their jobs better.

FOLLOWERSHIP

Followership is knowing how to act as a member of a team. Good followership is essential to good team performance. There are certain qualities or traits of followership that all team members must display to ensure their team is capable of accomplishing its missions. They include competence, **dedication**, **professionalism**, and self-discipline.

Additionally, followership requires every member of a team to conscientiously apply their **beliefs** and knowledge about a task or situation before they act. Then, the direction of their **actions** should be governed by:

- Established standards and priorities.
- Rules of conduct.
- The best interests of the team.

By using a common sense approach and taking only the actions that are

appropriate and necessary for each situation, the team and all its members will be able to successfully accomplish any assigned task.

THE TEAM AND TEAMWORK

Like all leaders, team leaders have responsibilities to their subordinates and to their superiors. Striving to keep their team productive is one of the team leader's most important goals. A team that can work well together can effectively accomplish its assigned missions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TEAM LEADER TO TEAM MEMBERS

Leaders at all levels of the chain of command must set the example for their subordinates to follow. Team members need and expect from their leaders guidance, trust, loyalty, respect, and understanding. To accomplish this, the team leader must:

- Be a decisive leader. Make accurate and timely decisions to prevent subordinates from wasting their time waiting for instructions, making the decisions themselves, or losing their respect in the unit's leadership.
- Be an appreciative leader. Respect and value the ideas, positive work efforts, skills, and abilities of subordinates. Reward and/or recognize them appropriately.
- Develop initiative in subordinates. Give them responsibilities that are commensurate with their skills and abilities.
- Be a caring, sensitive, and compassionate leader. Sensitive leaders are not weak, nor do they back down. They listen well. They avoid rejecting ideas and work toward compromise. Caring and compassionate

leaders sympathize with the problems of their team members and they help to solve them.

- Communicate effectively with subordinates. Make all communications (written and oral) clear and concise. Do not expect them to read your mind. This leads to frustration and disappointment, and the assigned task may not be completed to standards.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF A TEAM LEADER TO THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Team leaders are at the level where most decisions are made above them, yet they are responsible for accomplishing the tasks resulting from those decisions. Therefore, team leaders must be responsible (by showing loyalty, dependability, and integrity — just to name a few of the leadership traits) to authorities as well as to their teammates.

Team leaders owe their superiors a completed task: finished on time, to the best of their ability, and at the least expense possible. They are in a leadership position because superiors believe they can do the job — team leaders must prove it to them that they can!

HOW EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AFFECTS THE TEAM

Two of the most important affects that can come from effective leadership are the

successful completion of a task and a sense of pride for a job well done. To obtain these results, team leaders must motivate their team members to produce high quality work — for starters, this means that assigned tasks are completed to the supervisor's satisfaction and on time. Team leaders can be effective, responsible leaders by:

- Applying as many of the leadership traits as possible. Leaders who possess many positive leadership traits can by their actions create an environment where team members work harder, accomplish more, enjoy the task, and act as a cohesive unit.
- Pitching in and getting their hands dirty. The team will realize you are there to help them.
- Listening to, understanding, and supporting their teammates. Although team members realize that leaders have responsibilities to their chain of command, they also want assurances that their immediate supervisor is there to support them and not to take advantage of them. If subordinates know that personal gain and recognition are not their leader's goal, but that doing the job is, they will show the degree of respect and trust that produces high quality work.

TEAMWORK

Teamwork is the effort of a group to complete a task or mission. Successful teamwork requires each team member to **cooperate** with other members of the group in order to complete the effort as directed.

IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK

Learning about teamwork is an important part of JROTC. It is a team spirit where all members work together to achieve

the same goals. It is a willingness to give other team members a friendly push when they need it or a pat on the back when they deserve it. In teamwork, each member of the team expects the same degree of effort from the other. Then, when one teammate does it right, the whole team wins and when cooperation coexists with teamwork, the mission moves more quickly.

If a situation should ever arise where someone calls upon you to complete a job, task, or mission that is too involved for you to do alone, teamwork usually provides the answer. In teamwork, a group of people, or fellow cadets, is there to help you complete it. As you will soon discover in the following case studies, distributing food to the needy can be a huge mission. However, with good leadership and effective teamwork, the task can be accomplished. Find out if that is what actually happened.

Teamwork also gives you the opportunity to interact with other cadets. In most organizations that you will encounter, the members of a team or group will probably come from different backgrounds and will have different interests. But, by working together as a cohesive unit, everyone tries harder to get along with each other in a productive and professional manner. By working cooperatively with your teammates, you can improve your individual leadership, followership, and communication skills and abilities.

Another very important aspect of teamwork is that it builds friendships and fosters esprit de corps, or feelings of unity and pride for the team. When people feel united, everyone works together to complete the mission.

YOUR ROLE IN TEAMWORK

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. The links in the chain are you and your teammates. Without you and your team members, the chain would break. In much the same way, your role (and the roles of everyone else) keeps the team strong.

Your main role in teamwork is that of being a good follower. As you learned in the section on followership, even leaders have responsibilities to someone and that makes them followers, too. A good follower takes instruction and authority well.

The following story illustrates the responsibilities of leaders to their subordinates and how teamwork affects the outcome of a mission. As you read it, think about how the squad leader applied these responsibilities; then, answer the following questions.

Was the squad leader:

- Decisive?
- Appreciative of his subordinates' efforts?
- Developing initiative in his subordinates?
- Caring, sensitive, and compassionate?
- Communicating effectively with his subordinates?

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The Senior Army Instructor (SAI), Major Mason, wanted his cadet battalion to distribute food to the needy at Thanksgiving. He asked for a volunteer to research, plan, and present a report to him and the cadet battalion staff on the best way to accomplish this mission.

Although several leaders expressed an interest, the SAI selected Jim, a junior and fairly recent enrollee into JROTC, but whose leadership potential was very impressive. Major Mason gave Jim the order on the first of October and told him he had until the first of November to complete the project.

Although Jim's squad was a group of 12 cadets with very different and independent ideas and backgrounds, they could be counted on to work well together and to complete their tasks. Jim was their squad leader because he consistently displayed outstanding leadership — not only in JROTC but in student government and extracurricular activities as well — and he knew how to motivate people to get things done.

The same day Jim received the order, he called a meeting of his squad and told them about the project. Everyone began to speak excitedly and all at once. "What about calling the Salvation Army?" "Yea, that's right. They know a lot about that stuff." "My mom can get dry goods from the store where she works."

Jim waited until everyone quieted down before continuing. "Those are all great ideas. I think we can put together an excellent report, but we need to get organized. I have broken the mission down into parts and would like to know what you each think you can do. Some of the jobs are big enough for two or three of you to work together. If you have any other suggestions, please mention them."

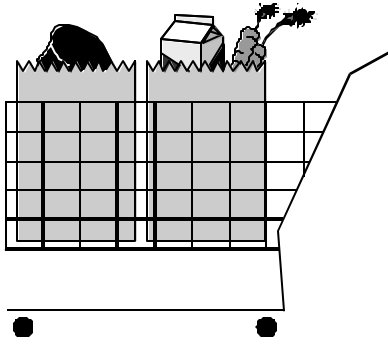
At the end of the meeting, Jim gave out the tasks. He charged Tony and Michelle with finding a place from which to distribute the food. Roger and Orlando were to find out how and where to get community support and donations. Mark was to prepare sample announcements for the school newspaper and for the public address given at school each

morning, informing the other students about their efforts.

Jim had Tina and Larry work out a plan on how to collect food donated by students and where to store the food products. Joe was to keep an inventory of the collected foods. Based on Joe's inventory, Margo was to divide the food into packages for the families who came to collect a donation. Sandy and Leigh Ann were to devise a parking plan and lay out the area for the lines to form on the day of the distribution. Gail was to obtain the addresses of homeless shelters and other areas letting the needy know when and where to come when the plan was set. Once everyone did their part of the planning and gave the information back to Jim, he would prepare a **staff study** for the SAI and cadet battalion staff.

Each team member or pair within the squad worked hard to develop their section of the overall plan. In some instances, they came up with several alternatives for doing their jobs. After discussing those alternatives as a group and obtaining Jim's decision on the best way to do them, they completed the parts of the project. They knew that on the day of execution, they would be responsible for executing the portion of the plan that they helped to develop.

With still a few days remaining before the first of November, Jim collected the results of the squad's hard work and thanked them for their outstanding effort. He wrote up a draft report concluding the research, verified each part with the squad member or members who researched it, then finalized the report.



After reading the report, Major Mason said, “You and your squad did a commendable job. A lot of planning went into this report; it is very complete and it includes some very sound information. I’ll put your squad in charge of making the formal arrangements for carrying out the project and I’ll have the cadet battalion commander assign other cadets to your squad to assist in the areas that you’ve identified. As a result of your efforts, I’m certain that this will be a very successful community project.”

If you cannot or do not take the responsibility to do your part of a task, you may fail in your endeavor to complete it. If a team cannot or does not work together as a cohesive, cooperative unit, it may fail. However, if every member of a team used their beliefs, knowledge, and actions, and did their part as a follower or as a leader, most likely the team would accomplish its task and successfully complete its mission. Individual responsibility, self-reliance, followership, and teamwork are all important measurements of success.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

In order to make your team more effective, you also need to be aware of the stages of development each group experiences. They are referred to as the forming, storming, norming and performing stages.

The first stage, forming, is characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group’s purpose (why are we here), structure (why am I here) and leadership (why is he/she in charge). Members are not sure how they are to behave. You know when you have moved on the second stage when the members of the team stop thinking of themselves as individuals and begin to think of themselves as part of a group.

The storming stage is one of intragroup conflict. Members accept the existence of the group, but there is resistance to the rules that are imposed on individuality. There is also conflict over who will control the group.

Different bases of power begin to show themselves through alliances, absenteeism, disagreements and little focus on the completion of task. You will be aware of moving through this stage when there is a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.

The third stage is one in which close relationships are established and the group begins to develop a strong cohesiveness. You are aware when the group has successfully moved through this stage when the members have assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines member behavior.

The fourth stage is performing. The group at this point is fully functioning and accepted. Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing the task at hand.

Each group moves at its own speed through each of these stages. The more skilled in interpersonal skills each team member is, the easier it is to move to the performing

stage. You cannot, however, be efficient in this process by directing the team members to jump from the forming stage to the performing stage. There are, however, interventions that the leader may use to help the group progress through these stages.

While in the forming stage it is important to ensure the purpose of the group is clearly stated and what role each member plays towards the accomplishment of that purpose. The group will need to discuss what behaviors will be acceptable to the group (timeliness, decision-making process, interruptions, voting procedures, etc.). When the group enters the storming stage it will be important for the leader to revisit the purpose of the group and each member's role. The leader will need to be an effective listener to make sure the root cause of the conflict is clearly stated. He/she will need to address the issues and provide effective informative feedback to help the group through this storming stage and into the norming stage. Continual coaching and supportive behavior is needed during the norming stage until the group has agreed to accept willingly those norms. Then the leader needs to know when to step back and let the group lead the way to performing the task.

CONCLUSION

In this lesson you covered the fundamental leadership concepts of individual responsibility to yourself and to others on a team, the benefits of self-reliance, the traits of good followership, and the importance of a team and teamwork. All of these concepts are part of becoming a leader and all are equally important to the successful completion of a mission.

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